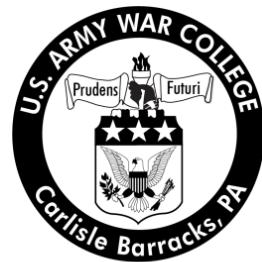


Strategy Research Project

The Role of Senior Leaders in Fostering Interagency Cooperation

by

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United States Army War College
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USAWC STRATEGY RESEARCH PROJECT

THE ROLE OF SENIOR LEADERS IN FOSTERING INTERAGENCY COOPERATION

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Recent experiences in the Global War on Terror in both Iraq and Afghanistan clearly demonstrate that there is a large role to be played by the interagency. In all phases of operations there is much to be gained by interagency cooperation defined as the coordination that occurs between elements of the Department of Defense (DoD) and engaged US Government (USG) agencies, nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), and regional international organizations (IOs) for the purpose of accomplishing an objective. Senior leaders can either foster or impede strong interagency cooperation and can therefore either have a positive or negative effect on achieving US Government objectives. This essay examines the role of Senior Leaders in fostering interagency cooperation and discusses how they can maximize the potential for achieving USG objectives.

THE ROLE OF SENIOR LEADERS IN FOSTERING INTERAGENCY COOPERATION

With threats to the U.S. as diverse as terrorism, cyber attacks, drug trafficking, infectious diseases, energy security, and the adverse effects of climate change, the national security landscape has recently evolved in complexity and scope. . . . because no single federal agency has the ability to address these threats alone, agencies must work together in a whole-of-government approach to protect our nation and its interests.¹

—U.S. Government Accountability Office
Report to Congressional Committees

History of Interagency Cooperation

The current U.S. interagency planning and coordination system has been described by some as cumbersome and inefficient. There are many examples, from Operation Restore Hope in Somalia in 1993 and Operation Uphold Democracy in Haiti in 1994, to the planning leading up to operations in Afghanistan and Iraq, that demonstrate cooperation and coordination among interagency partners can be disjointed, inefficient, and not executed in a timely manner.²

Presidential Decision Directive-56 (PDD-56), enacted by President Clinton in 1997, was the result of noted failures in interagency planning for operations in Somalia and Haiti. PDD-56 acknowledged that there were likely to be complex contingency operations in the future and that the U.S. government interagency needed to be prepared to plan and execute them. The objective was “to ensure that the lessons learned -- including proven planning processes and implementation mechanisms -- will be incorporated into the interagency process on a regular basis.”³ National Security Presidential Directive-44 (NSPD-44), published 7 December 2005, is a further attempt to streamline the planning and implementation process and designates the Department

of State as the lead agency for planning, preparing for, and conducting stability and reconstruction activities.⁴

An often cited perception regarding operations in Iraq and Afghanistan is that the State Department, along with other civilian agencies, does not have the personnel required to rapidly mobilize and deploy for extended duration for stabilization and reconstruction operations. In cases where this happens, the military often fills in the gaps by default simply because their personnel are available, despite the fact that the military may not have the requisite skills. They do, however, have the ability to provide security in non-permissive and semi-permissive environments which makes the military an attractive alternative. Effective integration of the military with other governmental organizations prior to the start of the planning process may be a way to increase the efficiency of the military performing in this manner.

U.S. national interests, and the ability of the President of the United States to use all available tools effectively to achieve those objectives, depend on the ability of all elements of the interagency to be able to plan, prepare for, and conduct operations as a team. One of the problems with the interagency and its planning and coordination process is that although steps have been made to improve the process, the full potential of PDD-56 and NSPD-44 has not been achieved. Fortunately, in some notable recent examples, key leaders both in the Military and in the non-DoD interagency have been able to influence the integration process and overcome institutional deficiencies. This paper will examine the interagency education and planning process, dissect recent examples of interagency success and failure, and provide recommendations to improve the process.

Policy Directives

Since 1993 there have been numerous examples of the interagency community, including the U.S. Military, failing to plan, prepare for, and execute complex operations in a coordinated manner. This has been to the detriment of the mission, U.S. national interests, and the standing of the United States in the international community. As cited by John F. Troxell in his essay Presidential Decision Directive-56: A Glass Half Full, Michele Flournoy, the principal author of PDD-56, has gone on the record to say that “One of the most powerful lessons learned during the 1993 operation in Somalia was that the absence of rigorous and sustained interagency planning and coordination can hamper effectiveness, jeopardize success, and court disaster.”⁵

The same can be said to be true of the planning for Operation Uphold Democracy in Haiti in 1994. The 18th Airborne Corps based out of Fort Bragg, North Carolina planned for a forced entry, while the 10th Mountain Division based out of Fort Drum, New York planned for a permissive entry operation. These two units planned in parallel isolation and excluded civilian agencies due to security concerns.⁶ According to Joseph R. Cerami, the lack of coordinated planning resulted in incomplete interagency coordination. Near the end of the summer, when integrated planning between the military and civilian agencies began, it was too late and resulted in little more than information sharing, not detailed planning.⁷

It became clear to the Clinton administration that there were shortfalls in the interagency planning process. According to John F. Troxell, “Presidential Decision Directive-56 grew out of the operation in Mogadishu, Somalia and the failed operation/loss of 18 American soldiers and 74 wounded. PDD-56 codified the Clinton administration’s policy on managing complex contingency operations.”⁸

PDD-56 “calls for all U.S. Government agencies to institutionalize what we have learned from our recent experiences and to continue the process of improving the planning and management of complex contingency operations. The PDD is designed to ensure that the lessons learned -- including proven planning processes and implementation mechanisms -- will be incorporated into the interagency process on a regular basis. The PDD's intent is to establish these management practices to achieve unity of effort among U.S. Government agencies and international organizations engaged in complex contingency operations. Dedicated mechanisms and integrated planning processes are needed.” Specifically, PDD-56 calls for the formation of an Executive Committee formed by the Deputies Committee that will supervise the day-to-day management of U.S. participation in a complex contingency operation. In addition, PDD-56 requires the development of a political-military implementation plan, interagency Pol-Mil rehearsals, an after-action review, and the development of a training capability.

Although PDD-56 went a long way in improving interagency coordination, Michele Flournoy admitted that it was never fully implemented. Perhaps as a result of the failure to implement it fully, there were still issues with interagency planning in the lead up to Operation Enduring Freedom in Afghanistan and Operation Iraqi Freedom. As cited by John F. Troxell, “In the case of Afghanistan, according to Flournoy, there was no person or entity in charge of interagency planning and coordination. Douglas Feith, Under Secretary of Defense for Policy, shared the view that the Afghanistan reconstruction effort had been mishandled by the State Department, resulting in a dysfunctional division of authority between State and the Pentagon.”⁹

Interagency coordination and capabilities continued to be an issue for operations in Iraq. According to Zeb B. Bradford, Jr. Brig. Gen. USA (Ret.) and Frederic J. Brown, Lt. Gen. USA (Ret.), “The recent difficulties of the Department of State in deploying additional foreign service officers to Iraq have highlighted the growing inadequacies of the nonmilitary agencies of the government in contributing to international operations. Agencies such as the U.S. Agency for International Development are severely underfunded.”¹⁰

As a result of the failure to fully implement PDD-56 and the corresponding failures in interagency planning and coordination for operations in both Afghanistan and Iraq, President Bush enacted National Security Presidential Directive-44, the purpose of which is “to promote the security of the United States through improved coordination, planning, and implementation for reconstruction and stabilization assistance for foreign states and regions at risk of, in, or in transition from conflict or civil strife.”¹¹

NSPD-44 directs the Secretary of State to “coordinate and lead integrated United States Government efforts, involving all U.S. Departments and Agencies with relevant capabilities, to prepare, plan for, and conduct stabilization and reconstruction activities. The Secretary of State shall coordinate such efforts with the Secretary of Defense to ensure harmonization with any planned or ongoing U.S. military operations across the spectrum of conflict. Support relationships among elements of the United States Government will depend on the particular situation being addressed.”¹²

Furthermore, NSPD-44 directs the Secretaries of State and Defense to “integrate stabilization and reconstruction contingency plans with military contingency plans when relevant and appropriate. The Secretaries of State and Defense will develop a general

framework for fully coordinating stabilization and reconstruction activities and military operations at all levels where appropriate.”¹³ The inaugural Department of State Quadrennial Diplomacy and Development Review (QDDR), published in 2010, is taking steps towards making this a reality. Among the initiatives stated in the QDDR is a “new international operational response framework, which will draw on the capabilities and expertise found across federal agencies and improve civil-military collaboration.” In addition, there is a plan to create a Bureau for Crisis and Stabilization Operations “to serve as the locus for policy and operational solutions for crisis, conflict, and stability.” Finally, it calls for strengthening USAID’s conflict and transition work by adding more response, recovery and stabilization expertise in the Office of Transition Initiatives (OTI) and increasing training opportunities.¹⁴

NSPD-44, like PDD-56 before, directs a way ahead for increased interagency planning and coordination. Also like PDD-56, NSPD-44 does not allocate the required assets to implement the directive effectively. The State Department is not manned with the requisite personnel to effectively execute NSPD-44 as directed and still fulfill daily operational commitments and obligations in support of operations in Iraq and Afghanistan. This could seriously limit the implementation of NSPD-44 in the short term if not addressed. According to Mr. John Naland, the president of the American Foreign Service Association and a career foreign service officer, the State Department is short between 2,000 and 3,500 people.¹⁵ The 2010 QDDR reinforces this view. The QDDR acknowledges that the Department of State and USAID have “significantly expanded operations in frontline states such as Afghanistan, Pakistan, and Iraq” while there has been no significant change to the workforce. “As a result, both agencies suffer from

historic understaffing.” In an attempt to alleviate the personnel shortages, Department of State is working with Congress to increase hiring.¹⁶

A more successful example of integrating the interagency planning process is the U.S. Department of Homeland Security National Response Framework (NRF) published in January 2008. The NRF is the guide to how the Nation responds to and manages incidents that “range from the serious but purely local, to large-scale terrorist attacks or catastrophic natural disasters.”¹⁷ The NRF can trace its roots thru the National Response Plan (NRP) to the Federal Response Plan first published in 1992 that focused on Federal roles and responsibilities in responding to a catastrophic incident. The Federal Response Plan was updated and modified in 2004 as the NRP and included all levels of government in a common incident management framework. The NRF takes it one step further and “commits the Federal Government, in partnership with local, tribal, and state governments and the private sector, to complete both strategic and operational plans” for scenarios directed in the National Preparedness Guidelines.¹⁸ The National Preparedness Guidelines, in conjunction with the National Exercise Program develop 15 National Planning Scenarios. These scenarios identify 37 core capabilities required by local, tribal, community, and State governments that will be supported by the Department of Homeland Security.¹⁹

A key element of the NRF is that it is designed to link all levels of government through scalable, flexible, and adaptable coordinating structures “to align key roles and responsibilities across the Nation” while retaining the Secretary of Homeland Security as the “Principal Federal Official for domestic incident management” as directed by the Homeland Security Act of 2002 and the Homeland Security Presidential Directive 5.²⁰

What this means in military parlance is that in a domestic incident management scenario there should theoretically not only be unity of effort which we would expect but also unity of command. The NRF discusses the requirement for both unity of effort and unified command with the caveat that although the Department of Defense is a full partner in the Federal response to domestic incidents, by law the chain of command for Federal military forces runs directly from the President to the Secretary of Defense to the Combatant Commander to the DoD on-scene commander and will remain under the control of the military chain of command.²¹ The military in effect acts in support of the on scene commander but remains answerable to the DoD chain of command.

Interagency Education System

Threats to the United States come in many forms. Whether they be overt military threats which are rarely seen due to the overwhelming superiority of the United States combined military power, or more insidious threats such as terrorism, disease, energy security, or cyber attacks, few threats can be addressed by any one federal agency. Because of this, a whole of government approach must be taken to protect U.S. national interests. Unfortunately, a fully integrated approach is often difficult to achieve. One way to improve interagency cooperation and collaboration is thru an integrated education system.²²

According to a report on improving interagency collaboration produced by the Government Accountability Office, there is a “growing consensus that the government’s professional development efforts could contribute to more effective interagency collaboration, which is seen as key to U.S. national security. Specifically, a number of reports – such as the Project on National Security Reform’s Forging a New Shield and the 2006 Quadrennial Defense Review, written by experts working in the national

security field – recommended establishing a cadre of national security specialists from all relevant departments and agencies, and placing them in a long-term career development program designed to provide them with a better understanding of the processes and cultures of other agencies.”²³ An important question is how does the national government achieve this lofty goal? The following is a review of education opportunities and initiatives currently available to interagency and national security professionals.

Significant thought and progress has already been made with respect to an integrated interagency education system. In January 2007, the Department of Defense, along with the Department of Homeland Security and the Director of National Intelligence formed the National Security Education Consortium (NSEC). The stated goals and objectives were to “develop a concept to improve interagency operations through common educational and professional experiences.”²⁴ An outcome of this collaboration was the National Defense University (NDU) National Security Education Pilot Program. Under the auspices of this program, a total of 38 students from the National War College, the Industrial College of the Armed Forces and the Joint Forces Staff College from the 2007-2008 academic year studied a specialized curriculum and received a National Security Officer Certificate.²⁵

Following closely on the heels of the formation of the NSEC was Presidential Executive Order (EO) 13434. The National Security Professional Development Executive Order, issued on May 17, 2008, directed a framework that would ensure that national security professionals had the opportunity to improve their ability to safeguard the security of the nation through integrated education, training and professional

development and experience opportunities. In July of 2007 the National Strategy for the Development of Security Professionals that was mandated by Executive Order 13434 was issued. “The National Strategy promotes the integration of national security professional development resources and opportunities among common mission areas in order to attain unity of effort across the national security community.”²⁶

An outcome of the National Security Education Consortium and the following EO 13434 was the development of the Department of Defense Civilian National Security Professional Development Implementation Plan. This plan is based on three pillars: education, training, and professional experience. One aspect of education initiatives has already been discussed in the NDU National Security Education Pilot Program. Training initiatives include approving NSPD core capabilities (strategic thinking, critical and creative thinking, leading and working with interagency teams, collaborating, planning, managing and conducting interagency operations, maintaining global and cultural acuity, mediating and negotiating, and communicating) and endorsing FEMA’s National Response Framework training as an introductory NSPD course.²⁷

The professional experience aspect of the plan can be broken down into three types based on the type of experience and the duration. Short term experiences may involve a temporary detail to another agency or working group and will typically be less than 6 months long. What the report classifies as a mid-term experience is a 6-12 month “semi-permanent” detail such as an assignment to a Provincial Reconstruction Team or Counter Drug Joint Task Force. A “long-term” experience will last for more than 12 months and could include working in another National Security department or agency.²⁸ It is important to remember that this plan was developed as a Civilian National

Security Professional Development Implementation Plan and does not include the development of Military professionals capable of working effectively in the interagency although clearly participants in the NDU program will come from the military students of all service branches.

A recent Rand Arroyo Center study, requested by the U.S. Army Human Resources Command's (HRC) Officer Personnel Management System (OPMS) Task Force, examined the development of Joint, Interagency, Intergovernmental, Multinational (JIIM) capable officers. The Rand Arroyo Center research team, in conjunction with HRC, developed four areas to study. The research areas were to 1) identify and describe the knowledge, skills, and abilities in the JIIM domains required at successive stages throughout officer careers, 2) identify developmental experiences associated with the knowledge, skills, and abilities described above, 3) create a model for developing desired JIIM knowledge, skills, and abilities in senior leaders and 4) to validate the model.²⁹

Research findings indicated that with the proper career and assignment management the U.S. Army could produce an adequate amount of officers at the Lieutenant Colonel and Colonel level with JIIM experience. This would greatly enhance the ability of senior military leaders and their staffs to integrate with the civilian interagency and foster environments conducive to interagency cooperation. The study looked at several different models for producing JIIM qualified officers. The Rand Arroyo Center study showed that if the Army adopted a broad approach to managing JIIM experiences over two thirds of Lieutenant Colonels and Colonels would acquire JIIM experience at some time in their career. The other model explored was to offer multiple

JIIM experiences to a smaller number of officers and thereby produce a fewer number of experts. One caveat that the study raises, however, is that by assigning officers to assignments that give them JIIM experience they risk having officers that have not developed the requisite skills in their area of expertise, the very skills that makes them valuable in a JIIM environment.³⁰

The promising news is that the Army is already taking steps that, in a small way, will have a positive effect on interagency planning and coordination. The Interagency Fellowship Program is one good example of a way to build interagency experience at the junior field grade level that can be used for the rest of an officer's career. Under this competitive program Army Majors annually compete for 25-30 positions. Those accepted complete Intermediate Level Education (ILE) at Fort Belvoir, Virginia in lieu of the resident course at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas. After completion of ILE they are assigned to a civilian department or agency in the national capital region. The purpose of the program is to immerse officers into a federal department/agency for one year to develop a more thorough understanding of the agency's mission, culture, capabilities, and procedures. It "allows officers to build key relationships while developing comprehensive solutions for our nation's most difficult national security challenges."³¹ In addition, recent changes in the Senior Service Colleges' student populations have added more foreign and sister service students to the population that already included students from civilian government agencies.³²

On the civilian agency side there has also been progress made in the realm of interagency education. As discussed earlier, NSPD-44 directs the Secretary of State to lead USG efforts to prepare, plan for, and conduct stabilization and reconstruction

activities. As a result of NSPD-44, the Secretary of State has directed that the Office of the Coordinator for Reconstruction and Stabilization (S/CRS) have the responsibility to achieve much of the task with respect to education and training. S/CRS training courses include: introduction to Department of State Agency Culture, Introduction to Working in an Embassy, Foundations of Interagency Reconstruction and Stabilization Operations, and Whole-of-Government Planning for Reconstruction and Stabilization Level One. In addition, the Foreign Service Institute Leadership and Management School offers training seminars designed to build leadership and networking skills. Sample topics include conflict prevention, peace building, democracy building, rule of law, fighting corruption, countering violent extremism, cyber security, disease eradication, and global climate change.³³

Leading in the Interagency

There is no formal mechanism or institutionalized system that directs senior military leaders or civilian interagency leadership how to manage relationships to ensure that all elements of national power are synchronized and working in harmony. Although NSPD-44 and PDD-56 direct that interagency coordination take place, they do not indicate the specifics of how it is to be done, which leaves it up to individuals and personal relationships to ensure that it takes place. Chapter 2 of Field Manual 3-24, Counterinsurgency, the development of which was directed by General David Petraeus when he was the commander of the Combined Arms Center at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, clearly articulates the need for the civilian interagency in a counterinsurgency fight. Chapter 2, section 2.1 starts by stating that “Military efforts are necessary and important to counterinsurgency (COIN) efforts, but they are only effective when integrated into a comprehensive strategy employing all instruments of national power.”

Later in the chapter is a list of those agencies that are deemed key organizations to include the Department of State, U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), the Central Intelligence Agency, the Departments of Justice, Treasury, and others.³⁴

What is missing from FM 3-24 is any guidance on how to integrate these diverse agencies in order to achieve unity of effort.

How commanders are expected to integrate elements of the civilian interagency does not become any clearer when you enter the joint realm. Joint Publication 1, Doctrine for the Armed Forces of the United States, states that often the interagency process is described as “more art than science” and in the same sentence states that the military “depends more on structure and doctrine.”³⁵ This dichotomy does not seem to bode well for the successful integration of the military with the civilian elements of the interagency.

Joint Publication 3-27, Homeland Defense, published on 12 July 2007, goes into more detail on specific groups that can be formed when needed to coordinate interagency efforts for Combatant Commanders. These include the Interagency Coordination Group (IACG), the Interagency Planning Cell (IPC) and the Joint Interagency Coordination Group (JIACG). “The IACG mission is to integrate and synchronize interagency activities to ensure mutual understanding, unity of effort, and full spectrum support.” “The mission of the JIACG is to set the conditions for operational success by synchronizing and at times integrating activities with the state and local governments, multiple national and intergovernmental agencies, and partner commands to ensure mutual understanding and unity of effort across the full range of military operations.”³⁶

The Department of Homeland Security National Response Framework also discusses an interagency coordination cell that can be mobilized as needed in response to an incident. In the NRF it is called the Multiagency Coordination System (MACS) and its mission is much the same as the IACG, IPC and JIACG. As described in the NRF, the role of the MACS is to “prioritize the incident demands for critical or competing resources, thereby assisting the coordination of the operations in the field.”³⁷

This is the gap that exists in the military and civilian interagency environment today. It is the role of leadership to fill capability gaps by providing direction and team building, among other things. Sometimes this gap is filled by senior leaders in the interagency, both military and civilian, that have the vision and foresight to see that in order for either military or civilian to achieve success they must work together. Since this is more of an art than a science, there are other times when senior leadership either cannot or will not admit that all members of the interagency must work together. At these times the mission suffers and it is much more difficult, if not impossible, to achieve our national objectives. There are, however, several recent examples of senior leaders and leadership teams that have achieved success in incorporating multiple elements of the interagency, to include the military, to achieve national objectives.

A well publicized recent example of senior leaders that were able to coordinate all elements of the interagency and significantly impact the achievement of U.S. national objectives is that of General David Petraeus and Ambassador Ryan Crocker and their actions as the senior military commander in Iraq and U.S. Chief of Mission in Baghdad respectively beginning in 2007. In 2006 the U.S. and its coalition partners in Iraq were struggling to control the sectarian violence that was threatening to turn into civil war.

There was a rising sentiment that the United States should end operations in Iraq. U.S. casualties in Iraq continued to add up and domestic political pressure was calling for a withdrawal of U.S. troops. It was under these circumstances that President George W. Bush announced a change in strategy in early January 2007. The new strategy would focus on securing the population. This would be accomplished with a new commander of Multi-National Forces-Iraq (MNF-I), General David Petraeus, and a new US Chief of Mission in Baghdad, Ambassador Ryan Crocker. In addition, President Bush pledged additional military and civilian personnel to be committed to the effort.³⁸

Petraeus and Crocker understood the necessity for the senior military and civilian leaders in Iraq to work together to achieve their combined objectives in support of U.S. national objectives and they were determined to establish their structures so that they could achieve a true unity of effort in a “comprehensive approach to protect the population, attack insurgent networks, and build the legitimacy of the Government of Iraq (GOI).³⁹

General Petraeus demonstrated he was serious about integrating both the military and civilian aspects of the interagency in the way that he developed his strategy. He used the not uncommon method of establishing a team of experts to look at operations in Iraq and provide strategy recommendations back to him. He called this team the Joint Strategic Assessment Team (JSAT). Significant was not that he established the JSAT but the composition of the team. In addition to hand picking military experts, many of which had worked for Petraeus in the past, he also selected civilian experts to be part of the team. The co-leader of the team, as well as other key members, was from the State Department. In addition, there was an oil expert as well

as a member from the International Institute for Strategic Studies. The JSAT was given three months to analyze the war and produce its findings and recommendations which would then be used in the development of a new campaign plan based on the plan produced by General Casey, the previous MNF-I Commander. A significant proposal by the JSAT was to formally integrate the embassy staff and the MNF-I command under the dual leadership of Petraeus and Crocker.⁴⁰

Petraeus and Crocker decided that a synchronized, whole of government approach would give them the best chance for success and that if it was going to work that it had to start at the top. They would be the forcing function that ensured that the military and civilian interagency arms of government would be synchronized. Ambassador Crocker had personally been involved in another crisis where this marriage of military and civilian interagency had worked successfully. Crocker was the U.S. Ambassador to Pakistan in 2005. After the Pakistan earthquake of 2005 Crocker was a key leader that synchronized the civilian and military relief efforts.⁴¹

Petraeus and Crocker worked hard to ensure that they not only directed that the military and civilian members of the interagency work closely together, they also set the example by their actions to both the coalition members as well as key Iraqi leadership. They routinely met the Iraqi prime minister as a team to ensure that the Iraqi government understood that there was unity of effort shared by all elements of U.S. national power. This allowed Petraeus and Crocker to synchronize their messages and prevented gaps in knowledge of what each other presented to Iraqi senior leaders.⁴²

In addition to setting the example at the top, the command team of Petraeus and Crocker forced elements at all levels to partner with their corresponding military or

civilian counterparts for both planning and execution. This started at the MNF-I staff and worked all the way down to the Brigade Combat Team level integrated with the embedded Provincial Reconstruction Teams (ePRTs). At the MNF-I level the combined staff produced the Joint Combined Plan which provided strategic guidance for all coalition forces in Iraq and included routine counterinsurgency guidance which directed that military forces integrate civilian agencies with the military effort from planning through execution. This was further refined at lower levels in the Unified Common Plans which were briefed jointly by both military commanders and their civilian counterparts to both General Petraeus and Ambassador Crocker⁴³.

General David Petraeus is not the only recent senior military leader to understand the importance of integrating interagency partners and conducting combined planning in order to achieve unity of effort in the Global War on Terror. Lieutenant General David Barno used a similar model in Afghanistan from 2003 to 2005. Although not as highly publicized as the success of General Petraeus, it was nevertheless a success story in interagency integration that preceded the actions of General Petraeus.

Prior to October 2003 the majority of military leadership in Afghanistan resided in Bagram while the diplomatic community, to include the United States diplomatic mission, resided in Kabul. That changed as Central Command began to establish Combined Forces Command – Afghanistan (CFC-A). Then Major General Barno established his headquarters in Kabul in close proximity to the U.S. Embassy. Barno went so far as to have two offices, one at CFC-A and one at the U.S. Embassy and actually lived and slept at the Embassy compound.⁴⁴ Initial guidance to LTG Barno from

General John Abizaid, then commander of U.S. Central Command was concisely stated as “Your job, Dave, is big Pol(itical) and little Mil(itary)” alluding to the fact that the majority of LTG Barno’s effort should be toward integrating the military efforts headquartered in Bagram with the political efforts centered in Kabul.⁴⁵

In his 2009 article “Command in Afghanistan 2003-2005: Three Key Lessons Learned, LTG Barno asked the rhetorical question “Do military commanders simply “stay in their lane,” work on the military and security lines of operation, and define their mission statement narrowly to deliver the “military requirement?” Or do commanders extend their horizons, seek maximum flexibility in their mission statement, . . . and drive their organization toward a broader set of “whole of government” policy goals to enable the overarching policy objectives to be met?” Clearly LTG Barno chose the latter and structured his command accordingly. In fact, the necessity to integrate the civil-military effort was number two of LTG Barno’s three key lessons learned. His first lesson learned was to focus on the big picture, “strategy, not tactics, winning not simply battles, but winning the war.” His third lesson was the essential requirement of “communicating and building relationships of trust with key players of very different backgrounds” as a dominant prerequisite for achieving results.⁴⁶

Fortunately for him the new U.S. Ambassador, Zalmay Khalilzad, fully understood the necessity for this type of strategy and the two men were able to forge a relationship much like General Petraeus and Ambassador Crocker did in Iraq in 2007. One notable difference to the relationship between Petraeus and Crocker is in the way that LTG Barno viewed his role in relationship to the U.S. diplomatic mission: “. . . the relationship between me, as the military commander, and the ambassador, as the chief

of mission. . . probably is best described in military terms as a supporting-supported relationship. The ambassador as the chief of mission was the supported part of the relationship, and I was the supporting part of the relationship with the military. . . We had things, clearly, that we were doing that weren't directly related to what the ambassador was doing, but we were in many ways a supporting cast player to an overall, integrated embassy effort that we helped plan, enable, provide people to, and think through together with the ambassador.⁴⁷ LTG Barno also established relationships with other key individuals in order to facilitate civilian-military coordination to include Mr. Jean Arnault, the Senior Representative of the United Nations Secretary General (SRSG).⁴⁸

In addition to collocating with Ambassador Khalilzad, LTG Barno also worked hard to ensure that joint planning was conducted. While preparing military plans LTG Barno made certain that the U.S. Embassy perspective was taken into consideration. He ensured that as a plan was developed key embassy personnel (less Ambassador Khalilzad) were briefed. This allowed him and his staff to gain better insight into the interagency perspective and adjust plans as necessary prior to briefing Ambassador Khalilzad. LTG Barno also detailed a colonel and a small group of field grade officers to work at the Embassy and form the nucleus of the Embassy Interagency Planning Group.⁴⁹ These efforts, and the understanding of both LTG Barno and Ambassador Khalilzad that neither the civilian nor military acting in isolation could achieve strategic victory in Afghanistan, went a long way in synchronizing both efforts and moving towards unity of effort among the military and civilian interagency and international elements.

The command relationship as structured by LTG Barno and Ambassador Khalilzad, in which Barno considered the military to be in a supporting role to the diplomatic mission, did not survive their tenure as the commander of CFC-A and Ambassador to Afghanistan, respectively. In May of 2005 LTG Barno was replaced by LTG Karl Eikenberry and Ambassador Khalilzad was replaced by Ronald E. Neumann in July of that same year as Khalilzad moved to replace Ambassador John Negroponte as the U.S. Ambassador to Iraq.⁵⁰

Both LTG Eikenberry and Ambassador Neumann made changes to the coordination system that was set up by Barno and Khalilzad and which had appeared to be working well. Eikenberry, who arrived in Afghanistan first, decided to move his headquarters out of the embassy and install it at Camp Eggers. Although he maintained an office in the U.S. Embassy, he was rarely there. This had the effect of limiting the amount of face to face interaction that he and Ambassador Neumann were able to achieve. Although this may seem like a small thing, especially with the communications systems such as secure video teleconferencing available to military and civilian interagency leaders today, it sent a clear message to their subordinates.⁵¹ In addition, Eikenberry returned the military focus to kill/capture operations which resulted in a rise in civilian casualties and a decrease in coalition support by the Afghan population.⁵²

Ambassador Neumann, likewise, made initial changes in embassy functions in an attempt to normalize operations. As a result, he elevated the status of USAID and downplayed the status of the Afghan Reconstruction Group (ARG), which had been the primary element for coordinating reconstruction efforts. Another example of the changes taking place at the embassy under Neumann was the dissolution of the Embassy

Interagency Planning Group (EIPG), which had been the focal point of joint analysis and planning in the period under Barno and Khalilzad.⁵³

Concurrent with the elimination of the EIPG was the removal of the officers that LTG Barno had assigned to the embassy to form the core of the EIPG. The colonel and small group of Field Grade Officers was replaced by a Brigadier General who acted as a liaison officer for LTG Eikenberry and served as the eyes, ears, and problem solver for him at the embassy (officially the Deputy Commanding General (DCG) for Political-Military Affairs). Some personnel present at the embassy at the time, however, assert that a high level liaison officer without the lower level functional staff or planning element to actually follow up on commitments is of little benefit in the coordination effort. In addition, a high ranking liaison does not make up for the lack of face to face communication between principles.⁵⁴

The previous examples of less than ideal coordination between Eikenberry and Neumann are not indicative of a complete derailment of interagency coordination during that timeframe. On the contrary, the pair did some things very well to include setting well defined strategic objectives. Early on in their time together they decided to focus on two major infrastructure improvements that could have an impact on a significant portion of the population. They decided to focus on road improvement and electricity production and proceeded with a unified voice.⁵⁵

Another example of a positive coordination effort by Eikenberry and Neumann is the two page Strategic Directive that they jointly issued. Succinctly put, this directed civilians and military in the chain of command to coordinate and work together and really emphasized that the military had to work to be more inclusive of USAID and other

civilian agencies.⁵⁶ Although a valuable tool, the Strategic Directive did not include the forcing mechanisms used later by the team of Petraeus and Crocker who required that the civilian/military teams brief their joint plans as a team thus ensuring that the directive was fully enacted.

Goldwater-Nichols and Interagency Reform

Is there a need for a Goldwater-Nichols type act to force improved interagency planning and cooperation? Just as important, if enacted, could it be forced to work and how long would it take for the changes to actually change organizational culture? The idea of a reform act for the interagency is not a new one. Whether it could be effective is up for debate. Some believe that the time for interagency reform has come. In 2004, while addressing the Marine Corps Association/Naval Institute's Forum 2004, General Peter Pace, who was then the Vice Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, suggested that it might be time for a Goldwater-Nichols reform act for the interagency.⁵⁷ Others have taken a stronger stance on the need for interagency reform and believe that "Congress should legislate the necessary additional incentives and requirements for serving civilian officers in various U.S. government departments and agencies, along the lines of the Goldwater-Nichols Department of Defense Reorganization Act of 1986, which applies only to the military."⁵⁸

Others, however, believe that as difficult as the original Goldwater-Nichols reform act was to enforce (taking at least 20 years to implement fully), the task was made easier because it was forcing branches within a single department to change behaviors and organizational cultures and nothing had to be "enforced or negotiated across cabinet lines."⁵⁹ Purveyors of this line of thought argue that there are far too many differences across interagency organizations to be able to force them to work in any

kind of coordinated structure like that directed by Goldwater-Nichols for the Department of Defense. A more modest goal, they argue, is to implement organizational change where “interagency individuals can actually be assigned to an organization, not just temporarily loaned, with all that means.” This includes both military and civilian with instances where civilians would be evaluating military personnel and vice versa. They believe that incremental changes, to include more interagency assignments, training and education are the keys to implement change, not an overarching reform act.⁶⁰ Steps have already been made in this direction within several organizations. Both U.S. Africa Command and U.S. Southern Command have made significant advances in the number of interagency personnel assigned to key billets within the command structure. The key to making this effective long term is to establish a system of incentives that rewards those civilian and military personnel who select assignments across the interagency, to include promotion consideration and guidance to promotion boards.⁶¹

Regardless of how individuals feel about interagency reform, progress has been made in that direction. As already discussed, the 2006 QDR supports the creation of a National Security Officer corps of civilian and military professionals. The 2006 QDR also specifically recommended implementing a joint duty assignment clause akin to the military requirement directed in the Goldwater-Nichols act.⁶² It recommended “creating incentives for senior Department and non-Department personnel to develop skills suited to the integrated interagency environment.”⁶³ The 2010 QDR continued along the same lines with an emphasis on the Department of Defense and cited a need for the DoD to continue to improve cooperation with the civilian interagency to include an improved interagency strategic planning process.⁶⁴,⁶⁵

Perhaps the greatest move towards an interagency reform akin to Goldwater-Nichols is the Interagency National Security Professional Education, Administration, and Development System Act of 2010 (INSPEAD) which was introduced as House Resolution 6249 sponsored by Representative Ike Skelton and co-sponsored by Representatives Geoff Davis, Vic Snyder, and John Tierney. Although not enacted, this bill called for a “multi-faceted system for interagency qualification based on education, training, and interagency exchange service” similar to the military joint qualification system.⁶⁶ The purpose of the proposal was to “ensure systematic, progressive, career-long development of national security professionals in the knowledge, skills, experience, and abilities that enable them to be highly effective participants in interagency activities related to national security matters.”⁶⁷

Another attempt at interagency reform has been initiated by Senator Lieberman and co-sponsored by Senators Akaka and Collins. The bill, S. 1268, is called the Interagency Personnel Rotation Act of 2011. The objective is the same as INSPEAD, “more effective and more efficient interagency collaboration.”⁶⁸ Specifically, the purpose of the bill is to “increase the efficiency and effectiveness of the Government by providing for greater interagency experience among national security and homeland security personnel through the development of a national security and homeland security human capital strategy and interagency rotational service by employees, and for other purposes.”⁶⁹ The interagency Personnel Rotation Act targets national and homeland security practitioners in the grade of GS-11 through GS-15 but leaves it to the discretion of the Secretary of Defense on the participation of military officers.⁷⁰

Conclusion

Threats to United States National Interests are varied and complex. They range from overt military threats, terrorist and cyber attacks to energy security and national disasters. Because of the varied nature and complexity of the threats it is unlikely that any single government agency will be prepared to counter a realistic threat to the United States without the assistance of other elements of the interagency. Therefore, it is essential for different elements of the interagency to be able to plan and conduct operations efficiently and effectively. As discussed, however, this is not always the case. Systems are simply not in place and institutionalized at this time to ensure interagency planning and coordination takes place routinely and effectively, especially between the military and civilian members of the interagency. When systems are not in place it comes down to individuals who understand the value of interagency coordination and are able to put aside organizational bias to make it happen.

Fortunately, there are several recent examples of senior leaders who have been able to put aside organizational bias and force interagency cooperation for the sake of achieving national interests. Unfortunately, these senior leaders have been the exception rather than the rule. Unless steps are taken to change the professional development model, senior leaders that have the requisite skills and experience to perform in the manner of the General Petraeus/Ambassador Khalilzad team or the Lieutenant General Barno/Ambassador Crocker team will continue to be a chance occurrence.

The planning for and conduct of Operation Enduring Freedom and Operation Iraqi Freedom have demonstrated that crises alone are not enough for agencies within the U.S. Government, to include the military, to put aside their interests to achieve

national interests. As a result, there has been growing support for a Goldwater-Nichols type act for interagency reform that has gathered significant support to include from former Vice Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff General Peter Pace and Representative Ike Skelton, who introduced the Interagency National Security Professional Education, Administration, and Development System Act of 2010. Although it was not passed it did bring attention to the need for reform.

Until such time that sweeping interagency reform takes place, as unlikely as it may be, incremental reform will likely continue to be the mechanism for implementing change. A way to bring this about is to increase the number of individuals within agencies that have an intimate knowledge and understanding of other agencies through shared training, education and assignments. Shared training, education, and assignments also allow individuals to build professional relationships with peers in other agencies that can then be called upon when needed for planning and coordination later in their careers. The National Security Professional Development Executive Order (EO 13434) is a good start in creating a pool of interagency professionals that have this opportunity. Although the military has made advances in interagency training and assignments, senior leaders should expand opportunities for interagency experience beyond what it currently is. The Interagency Fellowship Program is a valuable tool for introducing Field Grade Officers to the interagency but simply does not offer enough opportunities and should be expanded. Those officers that participate should also be tracked and managed in a manner recommended by the Rand Arroyo Center study commissioned by the U.S. Army Human Resources Command.

Significant progress has been made in interagency cooperation, planning, and coordination since Presidential Decision Directive-56 was signed by President Clinton in 1997. The conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan have shown a clear requirement for improved interagency planning and coordination. Policy has been updated, directives have been issued directing increased planning, training, and education, and senior leaders have shown what can be accomplished when a true collaborative environment is established. Individual agencies and departments have taken steps within their organizations to increase professional development opportunities within the interagency. Change is slow, however, and it may take years for the recent innovations to make significant improvements.

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